<u>REMARKS</u>

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the foregoing amendment prior to examination of the above-identified patent application.

The amendment herein is made to place the claims of the Application in better form and to ensure that the features recited therein are not interpreted as means-plusfunction or steps-of limitations.

The amendments to the claims made in this amendment have not been made to overcome the prior art, and thus, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

The present amendment also revises the Abstract to delete reference to element numbers therein and to improve the form thereof.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted, Shuichi HIRATA et al.

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September 8, 2006 GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C. 1950 Roland Clarke Place Reston, VA 20191 (703) 716-1191